

In the News: Returning to a Government Of, By, and For the People

Wanted to make sure you saw some of the news stories highlighting Whip Hoyer's [speech](#) yesterday on how a House Democratic Majority would renew Americans' faith in government by passing a comprehensive government reform package in the opening days of the next Congress. In the speech, hosted by End Citizens United Action Fund, Whip Hoyer discussed [proposals](#) that would make government more responsive, more representative, and more effective, including overhauling our campaign finance system, renewing Congress's oversight role, restoring voting rights, engaging in national redistricting reform, strengthening ethics standards, and modernizing government technology.

Washington Post: [Democrats Would Hold Quick Vote On Sweeping Ethics Bill, Hoyer Says](#)

"If they win a majority in the House, Democrats should quickly hold a vote on a wide-ranging package of government reforms, the No. 2 Democratic leader in the chamber said in a policy address Wednesday."

"The ethics focus from Minority Whip Steny H. Hoyer (D-Md.) comes as Democrats begin to seize on a spate of Trump administration scandals and the recent federal indictments of two sitting Republican House members less than two months before the midterm elections."

"‘The American people need to see that we’re serious and that we understand the scope of our challenges,’ he said, according to prepared remarks delivered at a Washington event hosted by the End Citizens United Action Fund. ‘If Democrats can fix government, we can earn the trust of voters to lead on addressing health care and infrastructure and the other challenges before us.’"

"The suite of overhauls floated by Hoyer includes campaign finance measures, new ethics provisions and voting process changes. All, he said, ‘should be packaged into one reform bill and addressed in the opening days of the next Congress’ if Democrats win control of Congress."

"On the campaign finance front, Hoyer said Democrats would move to increase disclosure requirements for ‘dark money’ nonprofit groups that can currently hide their donors, propose a new 48-hour disclosure requirement for independent political groups — matching the standard for candidates themselves — and create a new ‘nondisclosure penalty’ for super PACs that take steps to hide their donors."

"To better police the ethics of elected officials, Hoyer said, Congress should require the president and vice president to make public their most five recent tax returns, ban House members from serving on corporate boards and require House members to link to their personal financial disclosure statements on their House websites. Hoyer also called for giving subpoena power to the Office of Government Ethics, which polices executive branch personnel."

"Hoyer said Democrats would move quickly to restore the Voting Rights Act protections that were affected by the 2013 Shelby County v. Holder Supreme Court decision. He also backed redistricting revisions, legislation that would expand early and weekend voting, opening up a ‘national voter protection hotline’ and improving ballot access for service members, youth, seniors and convicted felons who have served their sentences."

"Hoyer defended reforming but not eliminating earmarks — a position held by many sitting lawmakers of both parties: ‘We believed then, as we do now, that transparency is essential to ensuring that the people’s interest is served. Republicans eliminated earmarks altogether, and the result has been an abdication of Congress’s power of the purse. Let’s correct this mistake together.’"

CNN: [House's No. 2 Democrat Outlines What He Would Do With A Majority](#)

"The No. 2 Democrat in the House, Minority Whip Steny Hoyer, gave a speech Wednesday highlighting some of the changes and oversight initiatives Democrats hope to launch if they win back the House majority this fall."

“Pointing to ideas that have already been proposed from a range of rank-and-file Democrats, Hoyer painted a picture of a US House of Representatives that seeks to correct what Democrats consider the wrongs of the Trump administration.”

“‘Our people believe their government is rigged against them,’ he said at a speech in Washington hosted by End Citizens United Action Fund. ‘This belief undermines trust in government and impedes our ability to govern. It must be urgently addressed.’”

ABC News: [Hoyer Eyes Democratic Majority, Plots Government Reform In Next Congress](#)

“House Minority Whip Steny Hoyer ... continues to help lay the groundwork for a blue wave this fall – not only campaigning for candidates across the country but also building his policy vision for a Democratic majority.”

“‘There’s no accountability in Washington,’ Hoyer, a Maryland Democrat, observed during a major policy address on government reform on Capitol Hill on Wednesday. ‘Under a Democratic House Majority, that would change. A Democratic House would conduct fair, honest, and thorough oversight to investigate abuses and hold officials accountable.’”

“‘People feel locked out of their democracy right now,’ Rep. John Sarbanes, a close ally of Hoyer, told ABC News. ‘Folks wanna see that we’re serious about reforming this system.’”

The Hill: [Hoyer Lays Out Government Reform Blueprint](#)

“Before tackling infrastructure, health care and the rest of an ambitious agenda should they control the House next year, Democrats first want to overhaul the way the government itself operates.”

“That one-two strategy was laid out Wednesday by Rep. Steny Hoyer (D-Md.), the minority whip, who thinks government reforms will boost the public’s trust in Congress, thereby greasing the skids for the issue-based reforms Democrats are promising if they flip the chamber in November.”

“Hoyer is focusing broadly on three areas: limiting the influence of money in politics; making it easier to vote; and adopting tougher ethics rules for Washington policymakers. If the House flips, he wants to lump the three together and adopt the package in the earliest days of the next Congress.”

Roll Call: [Steny Hoyer Touts Oversight and Ethics Standards as Key to Trust in Government](#)

“Efforts to boost transparency, ethics and oversight are among House Minority Whip Steny H. Hoyer’s strategies for restoring Americans’ trust in government if Democrats win the House majority for the next congress.”

“He highlighted a slate of Democratic bills that he said could be part of a legislative package to kick off a new Democrat-led Congress, including measures on campaign finance, voting rights, ethics and changes to how Congress works.”

“‘If Democrats can fix government, we can earn the trust of voters to lead on addressing health care and infrastructure and the other challenges before us,’ he told the group in remarks at an event hosted by End Citizens United Action Fund.”

“Hoyer proposed expanded transparency and changes to ethics standards within Congress. He voiced his support for a measure from New York Reps. Tom Reed, a Republican, and Kathleen Rice, a Democrat, to prohibit members of Congress from serving on the boards of publicly held companies.”

“‘We need cops on the beat with real subpoena power and the ability to punish those who break the rules,’ he said, supporting a measure from Jamie Raskin that would strengthen the Office of Government Ethics. Although OGE is able to identify violations of ethics laws and regulations, it does not have the authority to compel

compliance....Hoyer is still hoping to see President Donald Trump's tax returns, and would like to require candidates for the executive branch to release them."

"“There ought to be a requirement for full financial disclosure, including the most recent five years of tax returns, for the president and vice president. This is essential if citizens can be confident that decisions are being made in the public interest, rather than in the president's personal interest,” he said.”

“In addition to changes to standards for elected officials, Hoyer also touted Democratic bills that could be part of a sweeping legislative package at the start of the next session. Those include the Government by the People Act, a campaign finance overhaul measure designed to incentivize small donations; the DISCLOSE Act, a bill to require public disclosure of super PAC donors; the Voting Rights Advancement Act, a measure expanding the federal government's ability to monitor state election procedures to prevent discrimination; and the Election Security Act, a bill establishing grants for states to secure their voting systems.”

Bloomberg: [Democrats Need to ‘Fix Government’ If They Win House, Pelosi’s No. 2 Says](#)

“House Democrats should increase oversight of President Donald Trump's administration and tighten campaign finance laws if they win control of the chamber in November, second-ranking Democrat Steny Hoyer said Wednesday in fleshing out the party's agenda.”

““If Democrats can fix government, we can earn the trust of voters to lead on addressing health care, infrastructure, jobs, the environment and so many other critical issues,” Hoyer of Maryland said in a speech hosted by End Citizens United Fund, a group that backs a campaign finance overhaul.”

“Hoyer said that if Democrats win, they should immediately work on campaign finance laws, voting and ethics laws, and to change the way Congress is run. The plan calls for banning members of the House from serving on corporate boards and for restoring earmarks, used to direct funds to specific projects designated in spending bills.”

“Hoyer criticized the Republican-controlled Congress for failing to write major legislation through the normal committee process... ‘The tax bill is probably the most egregious example,’ Hoyer said. ‘No hearing, no public input. A bad process led to a bad product.’”

POLITICO Playbook: [Top House Democrat pitches quick passage of ethics package](#)

“HOUSE MINORITY WHIP STENY HOYER'S VISION FOR THE MAJORITY ... IMMEDIATE PASSAGE OF ETHICS PACKAGE ... The Maryland Democrat is giving a speech on government reform at Union Station today where he plans to lay out a package for how Democrats should clean up Washington: ‘To regain that trust, our response must be vigorous and innovative. Campaign finance reform, voting reform, and ethics reform, alongside new rules to improve how Congress works – all of these items should be packaged into one reform bill and addressed in the opening days of the next Congress, should Democrats be entrusted with the House majority.’”

“THIS IS JUST LIKE 2006, when Democrats rode a wave of corruption to the majority, and then passed legislation to try to clean the Hill up. This time around, polls consistently show that voters are disgusted with what they consider a Washington in absolute crisis. So the narrative that Democrats are trying to push -- that they are the savior riding into town to clean it up -- could be a quite salient message. EXPECT THAT ethics and good government will be a major part of a potential Democratic majority...Dems can pass a House ethics package that would change the chamber's rules if they get into the majority -- and that will have impact.”